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The Messianic Sedes in Genesis

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T H E M E S S I A N I C S E E D S

I N G E N E S I S

A thesis
presented to the faculty of
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Mo.
by

Ludwig Helmstetter

in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree
of

Bachelor of Divinity

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Chapter I. General Introduction.

1. Scope of the Thesis

The scope of this thesis is a study of the Messianic content of the Book of Genesis. It is not the purpose merely to restate traditional orthodox interpretations of the passages in question and to refute differing interpretations; nor is any attempt made to present new points of interpretation. The approach is fundamentally that of the Bible student whose purpose is to see what the text says and what Holy Scripture says about it.

2. The Approach

To write an exegetical treatise from this approach it is necessary first of all to honor the text as the inspired Word of God which is able to make men wise unto salvation. This attitude gives the Bible student the proper place and puts Scripture on the high pedestal that God intended for it: man is not to sit in judgment on what is said in the text or on how it is said, but is to be an attentive listener to what God has to say. As we approach this work, we are therefore conscious of the caution given Ps. 46,10: "Be still, and know that I am God", and Eccl. 5,5: "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few." In addition it is necessary to be conscious of the central purpose of Scripture, as it is stated by Christ John 5,39: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify

of me." Knowing that the O.T. canon in its entirety speaks of Christ, we must take it for granted that also the Book of Genesis contains Christ as its center. The burden of proof lies with the negative.

3. Reason for Studying These Texts

In studying the three ^{chief} passages in the Book of Genesis that have been understood as referring to Christ, we are not approaching an interesting sidelight in the book of origins, but the first appearances of the Gospel ^{the} of salvation of man. It is ~~the~~ the will of God that also we of the N.T. times study these passages carefully, as He says by St. Peter: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Pet. 1, 19). In studying these prophecies we must be conscious of the fact that the writers of the O.T. realized that they were writing about the Messiah when they did so. 1 Pet. 1, 10, 11: "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." That also Moses, whom we do well to consider the author of the entire Pentateuch, wrote of Christ we know from John 5, 46, where Christ says of Moses, "He wrote of Me" (also Acts 26, 22, 23a). We therefore know from the outset that there are prophecies of the Redeemer in the O.T. and specifically in the writings of Moses. It is up to the Bible student and theologian to recognize these prophecies when he meets them and to endeavor to understand them as fully as possible. To achieve this end in connection with the Messianic passages in Genesis is the purpose of this thesis.

4. Treatment of Differing Opinions

Since this thesis is written as a study of what the text says, it is more convenient to place the differing interpretations of commentators as well as the perpetrations of modernism and unbelief in a separate part after the positive presentation is completed. To treat each variant interpretation of the individual points that are in question in these passages would be too lengthy. Greater unity is achieved by grouping the false comprehensions and interpretations under logical heads.

Chapter II

The Protevangel, Genesis 3,15

I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

1. Importance of the Context

The words of Gen. 3,15 do not convey the correct meaning if taken out of their context. Considered in the light of the context, they are the climax of one of the two most dramatic moments of world history, the other being the crucifixion and resurrection of the Savior. After the great and glorious universe was completed, man was created in the image of God (Gen. 1,25.26ff) and placed into the universe as its head. Over the whole Creation God placed the superscription, "Behold, it was very good." Gen. 3, however, describes the entrance of evil, the opposite of good, into God's perfect creation. God is aware of this and soon appears on the scene in righteous indignation. He first questions man, the head and only responsible being in all the visible universe. Adam, the head of his race, not being able to deny the act of disobedience, pushes its blame upon the woman "whom thou gavest to be with me." The woman likewise cannot evade the charge, but pushes the blame on the serpent. Adam and Eve know that the Lord has come to carry out the threat spoken Gen. 2,16: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The Lord does not carry out that threat immediately, but first turns to the serpent with the curse, "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life" (Gen. 3,14). The curse continues, but contains what we have found to be the first mention of the greatest blessing contained in Scripture: "And I will put enmity between thee and the

woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

Before taking up the detailed study of the text, it is well to review the next several verses to see how man fared under God's righteous wrath. The Bible is written for man, and man's lot before God is its main interest. After the curse of Gen. 3,15 God turns first to the woman, no doubt because it was she that had permitted evil to enter the world. It is a significant fact that Adam and Eve did not BRING evil into the world, as is at times said, but they PERMITTED it to enter. Because they failed in this responsibility, a severe curse is pronounced. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (3,16). The fault of Adam was not only that he had disobeyed by eating from the fruit of the forbidden tree, but also that he had ~~dis~~obeyed his wife where God had forbidden. Therefore his curse is based especially on that added disobedience: "And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3,17-19. Then God made clothes for Adam and Eve and drove them from the Garden of Eden, lest they approach also to the tree of life.

Now the question before us is, what is the relation of 3,15 to the rest of this history? This study centers mainly about the identity

of "her Seed"; but to establish that we must first determine who is spoken to and who is meant by "thy seed".

2. "Thee": Who is Spoken To?

The meaning of all words spoken in conversation is definitely colored by the consideration of the speaker and the person spoken to. The simple words "watch your step" spoken to the competitive athlete set up an entirely different train of thought in the mind than the same words addressed to a lady walking too close to the edge of an elevated railroad platform. Consideration of the person speaking is especially important when one compares a threat of revenge uttered by a child against a stalking fullback with the same threat made against a rival. If we were to quote infinitely more extreme examples of how the person of the speaker and the one spoken to affects the meaning of what is said, we should hardly produce a situation in which these factors are more significant than in the sentence before us. The words are those of $\text{אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ הָאֵל}$, previously introduced in the narrative as Creator of heaven and earth; who formed man by a special act of creation and created him in His own image; who solemnly and plainly gave to man the injunction which had just been broken: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2,16.17. The person addressed in the first Messianic prophecy, however, is not fallen man. Boehl says: "Das evangelische Wort redet nicht direct zum Menschen, weil offenbar von den gefallenem Menschen kein Wollen und kein Vollbringen des Guten ferner zu erwarten war." P.50. What is said here is indeed of deep significance for the fallen creature; it is a very definite blessing to him. But it is spoken in the form

of a curse on him who led man to disobey the clear and definite injunction of the Lord. It is "a divine blessing, wrapt in judgments" (Briggs, p.75). The identity of the one who is cursed therefore sheds light on the blessing.

The statement of vv. 14.15 is addressed to the serpent, *וְהָאָרְיָה*. This is the beast that had appeared to Eve in the garden, had spoken to her about the command of God, had led her to waver in strict obedience to it and thus had been the moving cause of the transgression that had brought about this painful meeting. This beast is cursed in v.14: "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." But it cannot be that the argumentation which led Eve to disobey originated with one of the lower creatures which had at the time of creation been made subject to man. The animal world was not fitted out with the intelligence by virtue of which man ruled over it. Should it have been possible that a creature could deceive man, his efficient rule over all the beasts (included in the "it was very good" pronounced upon the complete order of things) would have been a farce. Boehl makes this pertinent observation: "Wie wagt es wohl ein Tier, dort Gottgleichheit in Aussicht zu stellen, wo der Allerhochste den Tod angedroht hat? Nur ein ganz eminenter Feind Gottes, ein wider Gott und seine Schoepfung in Wuth Entbrannter konnte es wagen, in solcher Weise das Gegenteil von dem zu behaupten, was Gott gesagt." P.51. It was not the serpent itself that perpetrated the temptation, just as the sword of Herod was not the moral agent that killed John the Baptist. The serpent was the means used by a higher power that wanted to destroy the work of God, and that saw the necessity of approaching into the closer confidence of the woman in some disguise, since she was equipped to withstand any approaches. When God now thunders the curses of righteous wrath over him who had brought evil into His creation (which was entirely

good, Gen. 1,31), He first punishes the serpent (v.14), just as the father of a slain child will soon destroy the weapon with which the deed was committed (Keil, p.72).

God does not honor the real evildoer with direct mention. If one will divest oneself of all previous knowledge and information concerning this passage, this fact brings up a difficulty. As has already been shown, it is evident from the preceding account of Genesis that the serpent could not have led Eve to sin. It must have been the agent of another being. Because one body cannot inhabit another body or control its will, the tempter must be a spiritual being. This fact becomes very significant in the consideration of the achievement of the Seed of the Woman. But in the array of curses called forth by the act of disobedience, not one is addressed to the real evildoer. Without penetrating the text any further, one should be tempted to suppose that it must have been the serpent itself after all. But every return to that supposition re-emphasizes its absurdity. It is therefore logical to look for the curse upon the real evildoer in v.15, right after the curse on his instrument. In order to establish the supposition that v.15 is not addressed to the serpent, but to the real tempter, we must first determine the real identity of the tempter and then see whether the curse here spoken has been carried out upon him.

Who was the tempter? According to all that God has revealed to us, the statement of John 8,44, that the devil is the father of lying, is based directly on Gen. 3, where lying is introduced into God's perfect creation. In the same passage the devil is spoken of as a murderer from the beginning, which statement is again based on the fact that it was he who brought about the fulfillment of God's threat to man: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2,17). The same thought is stated a bit more succinctly in the apo-

cryptical book Ecclesiasticus, 2,24: "Thru the envy of the devil is death come into the world." All believing commentators agree with Keil: "Dieser Feind ist der Satan" (p.74). Those who will deny that Satan was the tempter must not only deny the correctness of these statements, but also leave a difficulty in the text unsolved.

That the specific curse of v.15 refers to the tempter and not to the serpent is evident from a comparison of that curse with what happened in the opening verses of the chapter. Eve was approached by the tempter and grew intimate with him. They set up friendly relations. That is the thing the tempter had intended to accomplish by entering a beast, toward which Eve would naturally be friendly and considerate. In v.15 now the curse is one of enmity: it is the nullification of the friendship established. And as the friendship was not primarily between Eve and the serpent, but with the real tempter, so the enmity that will henceforth obtain will not be between the woman and the beast; it will be "between thee and the woman". That is spoken to the real tempter, Satan, altho according to its form the address is still to the serpent. "Gott tut dem hinter der Schlange verbor-genen Verfuehrer gar nicht die Ehre an, ihn mit hohen Worten, mit Engelzungen, niederzuschmettern; Gott bleibt stehen bei der Huelle, die Satan selbst gewaehlt, und weiss ihn auch in dieser Huelle zu fangen und in Bande zu legen." Boehl 53.

At this point we must also consider the application of v.15 to the serpent and its descendants as a possibility. Dr. Maier points out (p.66) that "the hatred and repulsion which often exists between serpent and man may be a natural and inveterate reminiscence of this event, altho this point has been unduly emphasized." He continues with a quotation from Adam Clark that settles the matter as far as the present argument is concerned: "It is yet to be discovered that the serpentine race have any peculiar enmity against mankind, nor is there

any proof that men hate serpents more than they do other noxious animals. Men have much more enmity to the common rat and magpie than they have to all the serpents in the land, because the former destroy the grain, etc., and serpents in general, far from seeking to do men mischief, flee his approach, and generally avoid his dwelling." Even the citation of poisonous snakes that will attack man does not prove the hostility of the serpentine race to the human race. One cannot generalize from individual instances, nor are even the most vicious aggressive snakes any more hostile than other beasts that will attack man. We must conclude that our text does not refer to the race of snakes, but only to the real tempter, Satan. The serpent and its race has been adequately cursed v.14. Our reason for ascertaining whether this curse (v.15) is spoken to Satan and Satan only is well stated by Keil: "Durch die Natur des Feindes wird also schon der Begriff des סָרַץ eigentuemlich modificirt";* and Boehl: "Die richtige Einsicht nun in das Wesen dieses Verfuhrers wird uns einen tieferen Einblick in das Wesen des ihm gegenueber gestellten Weibessamens verschaffen" (p.51). Having now identified the enemy that is being cursed v.15, our next concern is, who is the tempter's seed?

3. "Thy Seed"

The noun סָרַץ is derived from the verb root סָרַץ , "to sow". It is used to denote both the act of sowing and the seed which is sown. When used of man, it naturally denotes offspring. But since in this passage not the serpent itself, but Satan is addressed, we have the word סָרַץ applied to a spirit, which of course can have no offspring. The "seed" of Satan "embraces collectively all those who may come into the service of Satan, the evil angels and the human beings that serve his purpose" (Maier, p.66). That is Scriptural language. 1 John 3,8:

"He that sinneth is of the devil". John 8,44b the devil is called the father of lying. Rev. 12,9 is less clear, but based on the temptation in Eden and the same usus loquendi: "That old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Mt. 23,33 the Pharisees are called "serpents" and "generation of vipers". John 8, 44a the unbelieving Jews are addressed: "Ye are of your father the devil". Acts 13,10 St.Paul calls Elymas the sorcerer "Thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness". 1 John 3,10 speaks plain language: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother". Less clear, tho pertinent, is Job 30,8: "They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth". 1 Sam. 10,27; 1 K. 21,23; Judg. 20,13; Deut. 13,13 use the phrase "children of Belial" of wicked people. Judg. 19,22; 2 Sam. 23,6; 1 K. 21,10; 1 Sam. 2,12 have "sons of Belial". This array of Biblical expressions, which is by no means exhaustive, is sufficiently complete to show that Scripture in both the Old and the New Testament has one very definite conception of the "seed" of Satan: the party of the devil embracing all evil spirits and all unbelieving mankind. In them all is the evil principle and power that utilized the serpent in the temptation and which is cursed in Gen. 3,15. Briggs (p.75) puts it this way: "The seed of the serpent embraces all the evil race derived from him the serpents of the higher world, the evil spirits, and .. the serpents among mankind, the evil men, and seducers, indeed all the forces of evil which array themselves against the children of God". Keil (p.75): Es "sind alle, welche die Verheissung nicht beachtet und bewahrt haben, der alten Schlange als Beute anheimgefallen und dem Schlangensamen zuzuzuehlen, welchem der Kopf zertreten wird".

4. "Her Seed"

This is one of those points of interpretation on which serious-minded and thinking interpreters differ. In the present approach to the matter we shall not start with an enumeration of the interpretations that have been given, nor shall we introduce the matter with statements of Scripture, because there are no direct quotations of this passage; we shall approach the text itself, let it speak for itself, investigate the possibilities of interpretation that present themselves, follow reason as far as it can take us, and then turn to such statements of Scripture as have a bearing on our findings. We shall use commentators only to state individual points succinctly and for corroboration of factual data.

When the eyes of Adam and Eve were opened after their disobedience, they were afraid, not only, as they told God, because they were naked, but surely also because the threat "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" was now the next rung of the ladder for them. There is no indication in the sacred record that man could expect anything but the carrying out of this threat at this time. When, in the brief hearing before their judge, they pleaded guilty of disobedience, the sentence was not first pronounced upon man, but upon the serpent, and then upon the tempter. While man was awaiting his own sentence, he had to hear in the sentence of the tempter of perpetual enmity between the woman and the tempter. But man also heard something good: the woman was to have a seed. That told man that it was not all over for him; there must have been a change in God's dispensation as far as man was concerned. Already in the Lord's reference to "her seed" there is involved the official change from the religion of self-righteousness to the religion of grace; for it is only by God's grace that she can at this time be given a seed. On the part of God, this

is a strategic move that will result in crushing Satan's rebellion forever. Looking a few verses farther, we see that the threat of death is carried out upon man, but in a modified way. His body and soul will be separated in death, but he is not to be separated from God as Satan is. With the mention of a seed continued life is promised the race of man. This much is immediately certain: Eve will have descendants. At this moment that information is a great comfort to both Adam and Eve.

The Lord does not leave it a mystery why man, who could expect nothing but death, should have a seed. He announces the purpose of the seed: *וְיָרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת אָדָם בְּעֵץ הַחַיָּה*. Satan's purpose in leading man to disobedience was to destroy the works of God. God's purpose now is to overcome Satan and at the same time not to destroy man with him. In the warfare of Satan's rebellion against God, God now announces His strategy. He does not need to keep it secret. Satan had hoped to align man on his side against God (the "death" of 2,17 is essentially the state of separation from God in which Satan was already at this time); that plan is frustrated in that God first of all puts enmity between Satan and the woman. Then God does not inflict upon man the death that already rests on Satan, but gives man a seed. When the seed will appear, He does not say. When it does appear, the seed also is to be in a state of enmity against Satan. Their enmity will come to a head in a struggle that will end in a crushed head for Satan and an injured heel for "her Seed". In that way God's purpose of giving new life to man will be accomplished and Satan will be definitely overcome by man.

To every thinking person there must now come the question, why could Satan overcome Eve and thru her Adam when they were in the state of perfection, and then be overcome by their offspring when mankind was in a weakened condition? To answer that question we must first examine

the Hebrew text carefully. First we take up the use of the term **זָרַע** in those passages where it refers to progeny. Gen. 15,3 it stands for "a descendant": **וְאַתָּה יְהוָה יָדָע**. Two verses later it stands for "descendants": telling Abram to behold the stars, the Lord says, **כִּי יִהְיֶה לְךָ יָרֵךְ**. Often it denotes an individual. At the birth of Seth, Gen. 4, 25, Eve says, **שָׂדֵי אֱלֹהִים יָרָא אֶת־רֵחִי הַזֶּה**. Gen. 21,12 **זָרַע** can refer only to one person: **בְּיָצֵק פָּקָדָה אֶת־יִצְחָק**. In the following verse God speaks to Abram concerning Ishmael: **זָרַע פָּקָדָה הוּא**. 1 Sam. 1,11 Hannah prays the Lord, **כִּי־תִתֶּנִּי לְאִשָּׁה יָרָא אֶת־שֵׁנִי**. Gen. 4,1 Eve thinks she has the **זָרַע** mentioned Gen. 3,15 when her first child is born. 2 Sam. 7,12 the Lord speaks to David about the succession to the throne: **וְהָיָה לְךָ יָרֵךְ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָיָה לְךָ יָרֵךְ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל**. In certain phrases **זָרַע** naturally has a collective meaning, as in Is. 14,20: **זָרַע בְּהִרְצֵי**. The word study of **זָרַע** therefore leads to the conclusion that it may be used collectively or individually, as the context demands.

The next step is to study the syntax of the verse. **זָרַע** is immediately spoken of as **הוּא**, "he", and the injury given him is reported with **תִּשָּׂא אֶת־קַדְמֹתָיִךְ בְּרֵגְלֶיךָ**, "you will **תִּשָּׂא** him with respect to the heel" (the verb **תִּשָּׂא** is in question as to its meaning). The use of the singular pronoun and pronominal suffix points first of all to an individual meaning, but does not exclude the collective idea. But without any further consideration of the context one would in a case like this incline to take the individual meaning, since a plural pronoun might be expected, if the collective meaning were intended.

Since the syntax gives us a definite clue but establishes nothing by proof, we must look to the context. Several significant facts are to be noted. First, the alignment of foes in the predicted enmity: Eve against Satan; Satan's following against Eve's Seed; Satan against

Eve's Seed. To say that because Satan's following (a collective term) is aligned against Eve's Seed the $\eta\iota\psi$ must be collective, is offset entirely by the fact that in the next clause an individual (Satan) is pitted against Eve's Seed. The argument of symmetry achieves nothing. Next we consider the action. The first clause speaks of enmity between Eve and Satan; that is clear, but adds nothing to the progress of the argument. The second clause speaks of Satan's seed and the woman's seed. In the fulfillment we shall have to look after this; for the present nothing can be done with it. The second half of the verse speaks of struggle between the Seed of the woman and Satan himself. The action of both combatants is described with $\eta\iota\psi$, a verb much in question. The action of $\eta\iota\psi$ must be of such a general nature that it can be predicated of both the serpent and the Seed of the Woman. The philological facts on $\eta\iota\psi$ are well presented by Keil (p.73): "Fuer $\eta\iota\psi$ ist durch das Chald., Syr., und Rabb. die Bedeutung terere, conterere ganz gesichert, vgl. Roediger in Ges. thes. s.v., die wir in Einklang mit $\sigmaυντριβειν$ Roem. 16,20 festhalten, weil sie zu allen Stellen, wo das Wort noch vorkommt (Hi. 9,17; Ps. 139,11), besser und leichter passt als die auf Combination des $\eta\iota\psi$ mit $\eta\iota\psi$ gegruendete Bedeutung inhiare, feindselig trachten. Das Verbum ist mit doppeltem Objektsakkusativ constuiert, wobei der zweite Acc. die naechere Bestimmung des ersten gibt, s. Ges. 139 Anm. Ew. 281". Several other facts support these observations of Keil. No verb of hostile endeavor (as to snap after) is construed with the double accusative; to give the verb a different meaning each time it occurs in the verse does violence to the language; and the situation demands the defeat of Satan as a sufficient and fitting curse upon him. The meaning of the verb conterere, Gr. $\sigmaυντριβειν$, is not in question; it means "to rub together with injuring effect." The picture presented in the verse before us then is this: in the struggle between the Seed of the Woman and Satan

a severe wound will be inflicted on each combatant. The Seed of the Woman will injure the serpent's head, presumably by stepping on it, since His heel is injured; to the serpent this is a fatal wound. The serpent will injure the Seed of the Woman at the heel. A sting in the heel could be fatal and thus as complete a crushing of a man as the crushing of a serpent's head. But the contrast between head and heel does not indicate a fatal wound in the heel; nor does the situation call for the fall of both combatants. From the fact that this sentence is a curse upon Satan we may assume that the wound inflicted by him on the heel of the Woman's Seed is not fatal. But Satan's own power falls completely.

These considerations bring us closer to identifying the זרע in this that we now know that he is able to overcome Satan. This achievement of "her Seed" is one in which Eve herself had failed. It is not a combat with a bodily power, but with a spiritual prince. In such a fight physical numbers mean nothing; what avails is power in the spiritual world. It may therefore be definitely inferred from the text that "her Seed" will be a supernatural being. That inference is strengthened by the fact that Eve calls her first child חַוְּוָה , Gen. 4,1, showing how she understood the promise of "her Seed". Then it is also not strange that the coming Seed is spoken of as "her Seed" and not as usual, "his seed". If the Seed will be what Eve called חַוְּוָה , the father of that seed must also be אֱלֹהִים and not a mere man.

These observations lead us to some very definite conclusions. The זרע will certainly be an individual who is God but also man, both אֱלֹהִים and אָדָם , who will be at perpetual enmity with all the devil's following and will overcome Satan himself with a crushing defeat. That is Christ, the Messiah, who was man and God and who overcame Satan on Cal-

vary. To prove this we now call in Scripture, which shows us that there is nothing indefinite or equivocal about this whole passage. We can substantiate the conclusion that the מָשִׁיחַ must be the Messiah and the Messiah only by showing from Scripture these points: 1. That Christ was at enmity with the party of Satan ("I will put enmity between thy seed and her Seed"); 2. that He overcame Satan ("He shall crush thy head"); 3. that He was both man and God.

1. That Christ was at enmity with the seed of Satan follows from His activity in casting out devils and evil spirits, His censure of the Pharisees ("O generation of vipers") and all His preaching against the world, which is an ally of Satan. - 2. That Christ overcame Satan is taught in several clear passages. 1 John 3,8: "The Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil". The diction of Rom. 16,20 is not accidental: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet". Heb. 2,14: "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that thru death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Then there are all those passages which show the strenuous the futile activity of Satan in the life of Jesus: the murder of the babes at Bethlehem; the temptation, Mt. 4; the temptation in Gethsemane, Mt. 26,36ff and parallels; when Peter wants to dissuade Jesus from going into His passion, Jesus does not answer Peter, but says, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Mt. 16,23; Mk.8,33). - 3. That Christ was both man and God is clear from many passages; e.g., Gal. 4, 4: "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Other passages on the true deity of Christ are given in the elaborate Catalog of Testimonies, Concordia Triglotta, Pp. 1106 - 1156; on both the true deity and the true humanity of Christ we have elaborate treatises in all scriptural dogmatics. To present detailed proof for these questions goes beyond the scope of this essay.

5. The Messianic Interpretation of the Church

The Christian church of early times followed Eve in considering Gen. 3,15 directly Messianic. The LXX demonstrated their conviction by translating $\aleph \aleph \aleph$ with $\alpha \upsilon \tau \acute{o} \varsigma$, even tho they translated the antecedent $\alpha \beta \gamma$ with the neuter $\sigma \pi \epsilon \rho \mu \alpha$. The fact that this passage is never quoted directly in the N.T. does not mean that it was not known to the Evangelists and Apostles; they often refer to it, as we have shown. The Jerusalem Targum and the Targum of Jonathan comment with the words: "in deibus Messiae remedium futurum esse humano generi" (that is, against the injury of Satan). (Boehl, 70) The later acceptance of the Messianic interpretation is adequately stated by Boehl, p.70f:

Die Kirchenväter, auch Hieronymus und Augustin, liessen das Protevangelium abseits liegen und Augustin beginnt die *clariora vaticinia* mit der Verheissung an Abraham (de civ. Dei, l.XVI, c.12). Erst in der Reformationszeit, besonders durch Luther in seinen *Enarrationes* in Genesin, dann weiter durch Melancthon in seinem Commentar zur Genesis, kam das Protevangelium wieder zu Ehren. Luther hat auch den unvergaenglichen Ruhm, dass er dieses Evangelium sozusagen erst wieder entdeckt und allen Glauben der Väter auf dasselbe bezogen hat. Ferner legen die meisten Ausleger aus der nachreformatorischen Zeit unser Evangelium nach der persoenlich messianischen Auffassung aus. Solche Auslegungen finden sich z.B. in den "*Critici sacri*" und in der "*Synopsis* von Polus; ebenso verfahret Calov in der "*Biblia illustrata*"; Hiller, "*Vorbilder Jesu Christi*", pag. 19. u.A.

6. The Theology of the Protevangel

Having satisfied ourselves that Gen. 3,15 refers to the Messiah, we can now see also other points of theology, draw new inferences and notice more implications. The phrase "her Seed" now plainly refers to the virgin birth, as Luther has pointed out. The enmity between "thy seed and her Seed" takes on new meaning when we think of the inveterate hostility shown toward Christ by His countrymen who were children of the devil. The threat of God in 2,17 is now no longer modified, but is carried out to the full in the case of every individual

human being, being vicariously inflicted on the Savior on the cross. Thereby continued spiritual life is granted the race of man by God's free choice. As we now review the entire drama of Gen. 3 the most outstanding theological fact is the free grace of God. At a time when no one deserved anything but curses, God not only cursed, but also blessed. Gen. 3 is Scripture's profoundest treatise on the free grace of God, excluding the merit of man completely and utterly with the account of the Fall. Here we see the basis of and reason for St. Paul's continued emphasis on the exclusion of works from grace. What force does not Gen. 3, especially 3,15, put into these household passages from St. Paul: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. 3,21); "By grace are ye saved thru faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2,8); "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11,6); "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life thru Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6,23). The longer one studies the theology of Gen. 3, the more forcefully does it impress itself on one that the heart and center of the Protestant evangel is the grace of God in Christ Jesus, which is also the heart and center of the Pauline Epistles and of all Scripture.

7. Differing Interpretations

In strict contradiction to the Scripture teaching that the inspired writers of the Old Testament prophesied directly and specifically concerning the coming of the promised Messiah, modern critical theories consider such prophecy an impossibility. The several unscriptural interpretations are the consequence of a spiritual blindness that does not want to see what the inspired record plainly says. The two fundamental theories that are most dominant are that of the

progressive development of revelation and that of the late composition of the Pentateuch by an editor who used sources known as J, E, JE, etc. When interpreters have once left the principle that the text must be revered as the Word of God and that it must be interpreted according to rules based on the laws of human thought and language and on the nature and purpose of Holy Writ, then they can without trouble read their own ideas into the plain text without difficulty and without compunctions of conscience. That is the explanation for the amazing fortitude that has characterized the rationalistic interpretation of the text we are discussing in this essay.

The leading spokesman of the rationalistic interpreters is Skinner, author of the volume on Genesis in the International Critical Commentary. In the text of his exposition he does not mention the Messianic interpretation at all, but treats it negatively in an extended footnote. He presents the sum total of his findings in the verse thus: "The general meaning of the sentence is clear: in the war between men and serpents the former will crush the head of the foe, while the latter can only wound in the heel." P.79. He ignores the fact that in v.15 Satan is addressed and that according to his interpretation Satan himself is not punished for bringing sin into the world. The difficulty with the verb $\gamma\psi$ he solves by deriving it in one case from $\gamma\psi$ in the sense of "be eager for", "aim at", and in the other from $\gamma\psi$, "bruise". That is doing violence to the language. "Thy seed" and "her seed" he renders: "The whole brood of serpents, and the whole race of men." P.79 (on the whole race of men, also Briggs, p.75, and Hengstenberg, p.54). As already stated, not the serpent but Satan is addressed; "thy seed" must be Satan's seed. For that reason "her seed" cannot be the race of men: man has already failed to overcome Satan and therefore cannot hope to do so in the future when men will be more numerous because in spiritual conflict phy-

sical numbers mean nothing. It is not surprising that he says, p.82: "It is doubtful if, from the standpoint of strict historical exegesis, the passage can be regarded as in any sense a Protovangelium". With the mention of "strict historical exegesis" he refers to the contention of modern critics that the doctrines involved in a Protovangelium were not revealed to mankind until much later. That is of course shameless rebellion against the plain Word of God and unblushing exaltation of the product of his own imagination.

Dillman, who finds in the words of Gen. 3,15 the "idea of man's vocation to ceaseless moral warfare with the 'serpent-brood' of sinful thoughts, and an implicit promise of the ultimate destruction of the evil power," operates with the same principles. Of all the efforts to discredit the Bible, one of the most successful among the ignorant and uneducated is the type represented by this feat of Dillman: using a pious thought of a general character to hide a fundamental doctrine that does not fit into his scheme of theology. Gunkel, quoted by Skinner p.82, presents another such theory, which finds more acceptance among modern Bible interpreters than one might expect. He holds that originally the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent were mythological characters that were engaged in a mythical combat. It is a favorite pastime of higher criticism to place the early Bible stories on a par with the ancient mythologies of the heathen nations. But by this procedure the divine origin of Scripture is completely discarded and the whole Bible loses its worth.

The same rationalistic spirit is dominant in all those commentaries and Bible editions that not so much as have a reference to the Messianic content of the passage. The Bagster Bible, e.g., in its extensive discussion on Genesis (Bible Helps, p.15f), contains no mention whatever of the Messiah or of sin. Dods, in his piously worded commentary on Genesis, takes no notice of the Messianic element in his comment to vv. 14f.

The flaw in such exegesis is that it ignores the very core and center of Scripture, which is the Messiah.

The Jewish interpretation, as given in the Targum of Pseudo-Jonathan and the Jerusalem Targum, takes the seed of the woman to be the Jewish community which will be victorious over the devil in the "days of King Messiah". This collective conception of "her seed" cannot be held because the versions and the N.T. plainly indicate that the Seed of the Woman is an individual, namely Christ. The LXX translate $\chi\tau\iota\varsigma$ with $\sigma\alpha\tau\alpha\upsilon\alpha\varsigma$, and the N.T. shows that he who overcame Satan was not the Jewish nation but only Christ. This interpretation is no doubt the product of that pride and prejudice that marks the Jewish race. They have put themselves on a pedestal so high that they ascribe to themselves the very work of the Son of God.

The Catholic Interpretation is based on the mistranslation of the Vulgate, which has rendered $\chi\tau\iota\varsigma$ with ipsa. This has given rise to the doctrine that the virgin Mary is here introduced as the agency for crushing the serpent's head. This is normal Catholic procedure and involves the same errors that characterize the dogmatic perpetrations of Romanistic theology in general. The masculine $\chi\tau\iota\varsigma$ cannot be read and interpreted as feminine. If it is argued that the three consonants he, waw, and aleph are sometimes read as $\chi\tau\iota$, the feminine form, the contention must be granted, but must be supplemented with the information that these cases are always marked as a Q're perpetuum, showing that they are to be read as feminine and not as masculine. In this passage, however, no such marking is found, and both the verb and its suffix are masculine in form. Finally, according to its antecedent, $\chi\tau\iota\varsigma$, $\chi\tau\iota\varsigma$ must be masculine. That this argument is unscientific is freely admitted by Jerome and other Catholic authorities. But aside from grammatical considerations, the Catholic interpretation is utterly

impossible because the work done by the Seed of the Woman was done by Christ. There is not even the faintest reference in Scripture indicating that the mother of Jesus had any part in this work; all she did was stand beneath the cross at the time of this great struggle. Rather, there is definite proof to the contrary when St. Paul says "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God". A sinner could not have helped in the work of overcoming Satan.

The interpretation of Calvin is known as the typical interpretation. According to Calvin this passage "is a promise of victory over the devil to mankind, united in Christ, its divine head (Skinner, 81). This opinion still has a strong hold even among serious-minded commentators. Briggs, for instance, holds to it: "The seed of the woman embraces the human race as such" (p.75). Even Keil who certainly is not given to wandering from the literal statement of the text says: "Hie raus folgt indess nicht ohne weiteres, dass auch unter dem Weibessamen nur eine einheitliche Person, nur ein Individuum zu verstehen sei. Da das Weib die Mutter aller Lebendigen (v.20), die Stammutter aller Menschen ist, so kann ihr Same nur das Menschengeschlecht sein, welchem der Sieg ueber die Schlange und deren Samen verheissen wird." p.74. But Keil himself refutes this exegesis a few sentences later: "Da dieser Feind nur mit geistlichen Waffen bekampft werden kann, so koennen auch nur diejenigen mit Erfolg ihm bekaempfen, welche die geistliche Waffenruestung besitzen und gebrauchen." Mankind as such certainly cannot have these weapons. The fact that believers can fight against Satan is due to the fact that Christ has already overcome Satan for them. Even Hengstenberg, who did much to create proper respect for Messianic prophecy, is not correct here: "As far as the sentence has reference to the serpent, the human race alone can be understood by the seed of the woman; and to this, therefore, the victory over the invisible author of the temptation must also be adjudged. The reference to the human race is also indicated by the connection between 'her seed' in this

and the words, 'Thou shalt bring forth sons', ver. 16. Finally. - As the person of the Messiah does not yet distinctly appear even in the promises to the Patriarchs, this passage cannot well be explained of a personal Messiah; inasmuch as, by such an explanation, the progressive expansion of the Messianic prophecy in Genesis would be destroyed". P.28. The connection between "her seed" in this verse and "Thou shalt bring forth sons" in ver. 16 is purely imaginary. "Her seed" is he who is to overcome Satan; that is only Christ, without any help from the human race; the sons Eve is to bring forth are in no way related to the Seed of the Woman in this technical terminology. The statement that the person of the Messiah does not appear in the promises to the Patriarchs may be true in itself, but the argument he makes with it does not hold because ch. 49,10 the reference to Shilo can be taken in no other way than as a personal reference to the Messiah. In other words, Hengstenberg is actually subordinating the plain implications of the text to the mental picture of the progressive expansion of prophecy. Prophecy did grow by accretion; but not in such a way as to involve what Hengstenberg here claims. This whole theory is based on a confusion of Christ's victory over Satan with the victorious struggle of His church. That involves first the error of identifying mankind with the Una Sancta and secondly ignores the fact that when Christ fought Satan, the Una Sancta could not and did not help Him.

These are the most noteworthy of the interpretations that do not agree with Scripture. They do not stand, however, and we must hold to our conclusion that this passage speaks primarily of the grace of God in Christ Jesus.

Chapter III

The Blessing of the Patriarchs

1. Connection with the Protevangel

The Protevangel was taken alone out of Paradise by the first parents. This was their light and comfort in the hardships which they encountered; Eve showed this at the time when her first child was born, Gen. 4,1 (Fuerbringer *1). But the time was yet a long way off that the promised Deliverer should appear. Sin became greater and more rampant. Cain became a murderer, Gen. 4. The sons of the godly families took ungodly wives, 6,2. God was finally constrained to destroy the earth by a flood. But there was also a godly race among men. This was the race of Seth, in whose days men began to preach in the name of יהוה , the God of the Covenant, referring in their preaching no doubt to the covenant of Gen. 3,15. Later Enoch arose from the race of Seth; he lived in the true and saving faith, according to Heb. 11, 5f: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him." Enoch also preached, Jude 14. Enoch's grandson was Lamech, the father of Noah. Lamech also gives evidence of Messianic expectation in calling his son "Noah", i.e., "Comforter", a name that later came to be applied to the Messiah. Noah was a righteous man, Heb. 11,7, but all the rest of the world (besides Noah's family) was so wicked that God destroyed it by a flood. Noah came forth from the ark as Adam and Eve had gone out of Eden, the only bearer of the promise. His son Shem received the promise when No-

*1 Messianic Prophecies (class notes), p.8.

ah blessed only him with the blessing of יהוה, the God of the covenant, but also Japheth, father of the Germanic races, was promised eventual inheritance in it. Of the descendants of Shem, Abraham became the bearer of the promise. To him, to his son Isaac, and to his grandson Jacob, the second direct Messianic prophecy was made.

From Noah to Abraham we have the following line of ten generations: Shem; Arphaxad; (Cainan); Salah; Heber; Peleg; Neu; Serug; Nahor; Terah; Abraham. Noah lived to see nine of these ten generations and died two years before Abraham was born. On the exact date of the call of Abraham the authorities are not agreed. Ussher has 1921 B.C.; Calmet, 1917 B.C.; Hales 2078 B.C. Recent figures are nearer to the older date, 2078 B.C. Whatever figure be accepted, the promise to Abraham comes, roughly speaking, about half-way between Eden and Bethlehem.

2. The Passages

This prophecy is given five times, its occurrence extending from the days of Abraham into the days of Jacob's youth. Of these five occurrences, the first is chief and will be the basis of our study. The others must, however, be drawn into the discussion to supplement the statements of the first; for there are minor variations. These are the passages.

Gen. 12,2.3 (spoken to Abraham): I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 18,18: Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him.

Gen. 22,17.18 (spoken to Abraham): In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed: because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Gen. 28,4 (spoken to Isaac): I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Gen. 28,14 (spoken to Jacob): Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

In Hebrew we quote only the Messianic clauses:

Gen. 12,3: וְנִבְרָכְךָ בְּכָל פֶּשַׁע פְּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ כִּי :

Gen. 18,18: וְנִבְרָכְךָ בְּכָל גּוֹי הָאֶרֶץ :

Gen. 22,18: וְהָיָה בְּרָכְךָ בְּכָל גּוֹי הָאֶרֶץ :

Gen. 26,4: וְהָיָה בְּרָכְךָ בְּכָל גּוֹי הָאֶרֶץ :

Gen. 28,14: וְנִבְרָכְךָ בְּכָל-פֶּשַׁע פְּחוֹת הָאָרֶץ כִּי וְנִבְרָכְךָ :

3. The Spiritual Blessings

In studying this prophecy we need not determine whether it is Messianic; that is determined for us by St. Paul Gal. 3,16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." We know from the outset that the עַבְדְּךָ refers to one individual, Christ, the Messiah. All other suggestions are a priori excluded: Scriptura Scripturam interpretatur. A few verses earlier St. Paul has an equally certain reference to this passage (vv. 13,14a): "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ." All that remains for us to do is to study the detailed implications of the text as a Messianic passage and its relation to the context in which it occurs.

In comparing the five passages that constitute this Messianic series we note certain similarities and certain differences. In each case the verb is introduced with the waw consecutivum, placing the action into the future. The first two passages and the last one have the Niphal form of the verb וְנִבְרַכְתָּ, while the other two (22,18 and 28,4) have the Hithpael וְנִתְבְּרַךְ. In each case the Niphal form is followed by בְּ with the person of the Patriarch: 12,3, וְנִבְרַכְתָּ בְּיָהוָה; 18,18, וְנִבְרַכְתָּ בְּיְהוָה; 28,14, וְנִבְרַכְתָּ בְּיָהוָה; while each instance of the Hithpael is followed by בְּ with the mention of the Seed: וְנִתְבְּרַךְ בְּזֶרְעֶךָ. The Niphal is used twice in the promise to Abraham and in the one promise to Jacob; the Hithpael with the reference to the Seed and not to the Patriarch is used once of Abraham (22,18) and in the promise to Isaac. Literally translated, the passages with the Niphal read: "And there shall be blessed in thee"; those with the Hithpael read: "And there shall bless themselves in thy seed." To proceed in a scientific way, one ought at this point to take note of the subject of the respective verbs to see whether that has any bearing on the choice of mood. 12,3 and 28,14 have the subject כִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֱלֹהִים with the Niphal. Both instances of the Hithpael, but also the Niphal in 18,18, have the subject כִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֱלֹהִים. For the present argument we can draw nothing from the subjects used, altho we will have to discuss that matter separately on another page. To solve the difficulty of the change from Niphal to Hithpael we must first apply the hermeneutical rule that every word must be taken in its natural meaning unless that is impossible. The natural meaning of the Niphal forms is passive, "shall be blessed", and the Hithpael forms are naturally reflexive, "shall bless themselves", as we have noted above. Then the text using the Niphal form tells Abraham, "they shall be blessed in thee", and those using the Hithpael, "they shall bless themselves in thy seed." Since the context allows the normal meaning of the moods, the only consideration that can move us to for-

sake this natural meaning is a contradiction against other plain statements of Scripture. But there is no contradiction. The meaning of the Niphal statements is substantiated by Gal. 3,8: "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (εὐλογηθήσονται). All nations of the earth are to be blessed in Abraham inasmuch as he is the bearer of the Gospel at this time, the progenitor of the Savior, thus showing that the expression of 28,14, "in thee and thy seed" states more fully what is contained in pregnant form in the other Niphal passages. Orelli: "It expresses the objective experience of divine blessing". P.108. Nor does the natural meaning of the Hithpael contradict Scripture. Dillman translates (p.220), "Alle Voelker werden sich mit deinem Samen segnen", which states the correct thought, even tho he himself interprets it incorrectly. The Hithpael expresses the subjective appropriation of the salvation gained by the Seed of Abraham. Hence the use of and not in these instances. But that the subjective appropriation of salvation is not the main thing intended in this prophecy as a whole is evident from the fact that the N.T. always quotes the passive forms, εὐλογηθήσονται, Gal. 3,8, and ἐνευλογηθήσονται, Acts 3,25. This is also evident from the fact that the LXX translated with εὐλογηθήσονται in all five cases, whereas they could have used the middle form εὐλογήσονται in 22,18 and 26,4 without mistranslating. In their translation they evidently embodied the prevalent interpretation, as Dr. Fuerbringer has recently pointed out is the case in their translations of the prophets. The early church never wavered from the passive conception, the objective blessing of God in Christ; but exegetes of more recent times have tried to take all the forms, Niphal as well as Hithpael, in the reflexive and subjective sense. That mistake results mainly from the attempt "to explain the fundamental passage by

the derived ones" (Ps. 72,17 et al.), "and force upon the Niphal the significance of the Hithpael". Hengstenberg, p.55. That is of course a transgression of hermeneutical rules. Derived passages must be interpreted in the light of fundamental passages. We must hold to the normal meaning of the Niphal. That is fundamental to the understanding of the whole series of prophecies.

The objective justification is clearly presented as universal. The curse that came upon all men in consequence of the Fall, Gen. 3, will be removed from all mankind by the Seed of Abraham. That not all men accept the blessing does not invalidate it; God has blessed even those who spurn His grace with the redemption of Christ. All families and all nations, the smallest and the largest units in the organization of society, will be blessed. The families are described as those of the הַבְּרִיָּה , the הַבְּרִיָּה that was cursed Gen. 3,17; the reference is therefore to all families of all time of every race and description: they must all live on the הַבְּרִיָּה . The הַבְּרִיָּה are the larger organizations of society, large groups of families, living all over the wide extent of the הַבְּרִיָּה (שָׂרָא). Those are the nations, countries, lands, peoples, whatever we choose to call them. The universality of God's blessing is already assured by the mention of בְּכָל־בְּרִיָּה ; it is emphasized by the triple occurrence of the phrase בְּכָל־בְּרִיָּה and by the recurrence of בְּכָל־בְּרִיָּה in the blessing spoken to Jacob. We have here the assurance that everyone is included under this blessing. The speaker is יְהוָה , God as the Changeless One, whose promise stands fast: all families WILL BE BLESSED. That this blessing is a spiritual blessing is certain from the fact that the Seed of Abraham, in whom all are to be blessed, is Christ, as the Holy Ghost had St. Paul tell us. The blessings of Christ are always primarily spiritual and secondarily temporal. The great assurance of this sedes of universal grace does not lie on the surface. It is one of those fountains

of assurance that God has placed into Scripture to double and redouble the assurance of other passages.

In this connection it is natural to ask whether the Patriarchs understood this promise in such a way that they received this comfort. We need not speculate about the matter, for God has seen fit to inform us. In the great chapter on faith in Hebrews we see among other things also that the mind of the Patriarchs was not fastened on earthly glory, but on the glory of the life to come, v.9f: "By faith he" (Abraham) "sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God". Abraham built many a city in his day, being a man of great riches and a large household who moved about from place to place; but he longed for a better place, where God is the builder. That is brought out even more forcefully v.15ff) "And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." So much for the matter of the heavenly-mindedness of the Patriarchs. That they received and trusted in the same promise that we must now study with great diligence we see in Heb. 11,13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." That the persuasion which they embraced centred definitely and entirely about Christ is taught John 8,56: "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." There is nothing unclear about that; and yet, it carries with it a host of implications that do not lie on the surface. The expression "my day" is parallel with expressions such as "the day of

Alexander the Great", denoting of course the time when Alexander was in his glory as world-conqueror. Abraham saw Jesus as the spiritual world-conqueror. That made him glad and he rejoiced over it. In seeing the day of Jesus, Abraham learned how his admission to the city built by God was provided; and not only Abraham, the only one of the Patriarchs mentioned by name in this connection, but Isaac and Jacob also; Heb. 11,13: "These all died in faith." We do not go beyond the plain statements of the N.T. text in saying that these promises were understood better by the Patriarchs than we understand them today.

4. The Temporal Blessings

Each time the promise of the blessing thru the Seed of Abraham is repeated, it is accompanied by vast temporal promises that have all the marks of poetic exaggeration if one does not consider the speaker and the literal fulfilment. This vast temporal promise is not given in its entirety at any one time; but the scope of the promise in its entirety was given to each patriarch: to Abraham, Gen. 12,2.3; 13,14-17; 15,5; 17,5-8; 18,17.18; 22,18; to Isaac: 26,4.24; and to Jacob, 28,13-15; 35,11-13; 46,3f. The fact that the most extravagant details of the promise are given expressly to Jacob bids us apply all the details of these promises to all three Patriarchs. We have therefore compiled all the statements made from time to time into one paragraph:

In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand ~~thly~~ which is upon the sea shore (22,17) and as the dust of the earth (28,14); I will surely make of thee a great and mighty nation (18,18); a company of nations shall be of thee (36,11a) and kings shall come out of thy loins (17,6; 35,11b); and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies (22,17); I will give unto thy seed all these countries (26,4), and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south (28,14); and I will make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing; I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee (12,2b.3); (and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed, 28,14) because thou hast obeyed my voice (22,17).

Our only purpose in studying this tremendous temporal promise is to point out the Messianic prophecy as its climax and thereby to emphasize the magnitude and relative importance of the Messianic promise in the mind of God, the Speaker, and of Abraham (and the other Patriarchs), who certainly understood Him (Gen.15,6).

With the double use of a construction of certainty and assurance that the English language does not know the Lord tells Abraham: וְאָבְרָהָם יָדָעְתִּי כִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתָּה. We have placed this statement first in compiling the series of promises because all the temporal and spiritual extravagances of God's grace that are to follow are already contained in it. The Lord adds three concrete comparisons: Thy seed shall be as the stars of the heaven; as the sand which is upon the sea shore; as the dust of the earth. The Lord could hardly have told the Patriarchs in a plainer way that their seed will be so numerous that no man will even think of attempting to number it. (וְלֹא יִסְמְרוּ in this passage is manifestly a collective term.) This statement is further expanded with the promise to mould this seed into a great and mighty nation and into a company of nations. The reference to the company of nations naturally leads one to think of the separate nations that have issued from Abraham thru his several sons; but that the reference is only to the twelve tribes of Israel as a company of nations follows from the fact that these words are addressed to Jacob, 35,11. The "great and mighty nation" and the "company of nations" are therefore identical, perhaps referring to different periods in the history of Israel, as when in the time of the Judges Israel was but a "company of nations", and in the golden era of David and Solomon Israel was indeed a "great and mighty nation" that was feared by all the earth. After the reference to a great nation the mention of kings is not new. These kings are of course the line of David. - The fact that all the kings of this great and mighty nation were of one dynasty, which is a unique thing in the history of the world, is not mentioned, but is certainly a part of the blessing in its fulfilment. The blessing sounds

almost too big in the form of prophecy; but in the fulfilment even more is added. - The kings of the great nation which will come of the Patriarchs will possess the gate of their enemies; they will possess all the countries of the Land of Canaan and will spread out in every direction from there. That is a prophecy of military success and prestige and expansion as a nation. It was fulfilled especially in the golden age, but also earlier under Joshua and at all other times when Israel relied on the Lord their God. The many defeats and the ultimate destruction of Israel as a nation in no way minimize the fulfilment because in those times the seed of Abraham was unfaithful and had to be chastened.

From this point the prophecy moves on directly toward its ultimate climax. It is, as it were, a summary of the promises already discussed, when God tells Abraham, "I will make thy name great." It may also be "a reference to the changing of his name from Abram (the father is exalted) to Abraham (the father of a multitude)." Maier, 191. The promise that Abraham's name will be great has been fulfilled to the very letter not only in the vast temporal blessings recounted above, but also in the spiritual blessings yet to be mentioned. Today in the Church of God Abraham stands as the father of all believers; that is stated authoritatively Gal. 3,7: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." This passage indicates also that not only descendants according to the body were given him in countless numbers, but also a spiritual progeny of similar magnitude. All that are in Christ call Abraham their Father. That is the great name of Abraham.

The promise, "Thou shalt be a blessing", is likewise gloriously fulfilled. "All direct blessedness which the world is now or shall hereafter be possessed of, is owing instrumentally to Abraham and his posterity." (Quoted by Maier, 192.) History does not bear out the supposi-

tion that the Jews are a blessing to the earth; they are to this day a standing curse, even tho in certain periods of their history they were a blessing. Abraham is a blessing today insofar as he was the bearer of Christianity, which has been instrumental in appropriating the blessings of spiritual life and of civilization to the world. The text itself, however, does not go quite that far in the subsequent expansion on the blessing of Abraham. I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee." The blessing and curse of mankind depend upon their attitude to Abraham; as they are either friendly or inimical to Abraham, he becomes blessing or curse to them. (Fuerbringer.^{*1}) Sel- lin (p.91): "Weil Jahve seinen Geschichtsplan an Abrams Person bindet, haengt der goettliche Segen und Fluch der Menschheit - an Israel ist nicht gedacht - von ihrer inneren Stellung zur Glaubensgestalt Abrams ab. Waehrend Abrams Geschichte unterwegs Segen und Fluch herbeifuehrt, ist das universale Ziel lauther Segen". - Two verbs are used for "curse". The curse of men against Abraham is expressed with עִזְּפוּ, "consider lightly", "deride". This cursing implies not only direct malediction, but even lack of proper esteem for him who is the bearer of God's grace to men. The curse pronounced upon men for their improper attitude toward Abraham is expressed with נָחַם. This verb is used exclusively of a cursing by God Himself. It is God's punishment that is threatened. The fact that this clause uses the singular (נָחַם אֱלֹהִים) shows that no one will escape that curse. This promise puts Abraham on a higher pedestal among men than any other in this whole series except the Messianic prophecy. Also Ishmael became a great nation, but to be a touchstone of blessing and curse among men was granted to none but the Patriarchs themselves and to the chosen people (Num. 24,9 Balaam bases his refusal to curse Israel on this passage).

*¹ Mess. Proph. P. II.

5. Relation of the Temporal Promise to the Spiritual

The individual points in the blessing of Abraham lead logically and directly to the Messianic climax: "In thee and in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That is the greatest blessing. It is the removal of the curse laid upon mankind Gen. 3, under which countless progeny, military success, national prestige, greatness and fame meant nothing, until He should come thru whom the head of the serpent should be crushed. All previous blessings are as nothing without this one; in fact, the blessing of peace with God that will be bestowed upon mankind thru the Seed of Abraham is what makes blessings out of all these temporal promises.

Scripture draws the magnitude of the blessings pronounced upon the Patriarchs, especially on Abraham, with a much more colossal picture than we have yet presented. The crescendo of a great symphony orchestra is the more forceful and overwhelming, the softer it begins. The blessings of Abraham likewise become the more astounding when seen to rest on absolutely nothing tangible, but only on the Word of God. It is pure faith that is demanded of Abraham. Gen. 12,1 he is told to leave his native land, his relationship and his immediate family, to go to a land that is utterly unknown to him. To one whose ties with homeland and relatives and immediate family are renewed from time to time by the most modern conveniences of transportation and communication it is hard to appreciate what the Lord here asked of Abraham. His obedience is rightly characterized Hebrews 11,8 as an act of faith. After he has obeyed the command to leave all to follow the Lord, he is promised huge multitudes of descendants at a time when his wife Sarai was barren and they are both rapidly advancing in age. Nor was Abraham descended from a family that might expect the promise of special spiritual blessings, for "they served other gods", Josh. 24,2. Abraham sees nothing about him anywhere on which he can in any way

base his conviction that these promises will come true, nor has he any reason whatever for considering himself worthy of such consideration from the Lord Jehovah. For the first Abraham must believe without resting his faith on anything but the Word of God. Later the Lord strengthens his faith by fulfilling parts of the temporal promise (defeat of the enemies of Lot, Gen. 14,1-16; birth of Isaac, 21,1-5). The temporal promises therefore serve to strengthen the faith of Abraham and to magnify the greatness of the Messianic prophecy.

6. Theology

The story of Abraham is, first of all, Scripture's most detailed and forceful definition of faith. And it is furthermore a monumental presentation of the Scripture doctrine that God's grace is pure grace. The blessings of Abraham are built entirely and only on God's grace; that fact multiplies the magnificence of the blessings infinitely. And the blessings are received by Abraham entirely by faith, so that he saw them "afar off", and "was persuaded of them", and "embraced them". Of such as Abraham Christ said: "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed" (John 20,29b). In Gen. 3,15 we have the exclusion of man's merit from salvation. Here that is prominent again, but there is added to it the positive mention of faith. Above all, the objective justification of mankind thru the Seed of Abraham is here presented as the heart and center of the whole doctrine of man's salvation. The Protevangel mentions only the fact that Christ will overcome Satan (the redemption); man's blessing is included only by implication. The Messianic Promise of the Patriarchs states that implication and explains it. Thus the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God grows by logical steps in the Book of Genesis. The doctrine of the redemption is followed by the doctrine of justification by faith.

7. Differing Interpretations

Since St. Paul identifies this promise as Messianic the only objection to the Messianic interpretation comes from rationalistic quarters.

The chief objections hinge upon the explanation of וַיְבָרֶךְ and וַיְבָרֶכְהוּ . Skinner (p.244f) wants to translate the Niphal forms with the reflexive meaning. The reflexive sense he interprets as follows: "In invoking the blessing upon themselves or others, they will use such words as 'God make thee like Abraham' etc; and the opposite." Gunkel: "So the ancient mind expressed its admiration of a man's prosperity" (Skinner, 244). "This interpretation robs the passage of its blessing and ignores the connection which the passage has with Genesis 3,15" (Maier, 195). Our objection that the N.T. assures us that the Niphal must be passive is met by Delitzsch thus: "The $\epsilon\upsilon\lambda\omicron\gamma\eta\theta\eta\sigma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\iota$ of the LXX. adopted in the N.T. does not decide the question." That attitude is based on the supposition that the writers of the N.T. accommodated themselves to the accepted translation then in vogue; but that militates against the infallibility of Scripture and against the doctrine of inspiration. Orelli must be charged with violent abuse of the language and grammar when he decides the question without argument as follows: "The Niphal, as is well known, is primarily reflexive." Skinner observes: "It is significant that the Pu., which is the proper pas. of וַיְבָרֶכְהוּ , is consistently avoided; and the presumption appears to be distinctly in favour of the sense given in the text above", i.e., the reflexive sense. (P.244f, note.) But as a matter of fact the Pual is more rare in the Pentateuch than the Niphal. All these interpretations are the result of refusing to take the text as it stands. - Both extremes are wrong. The Niphal must be taken as passive, the Hithpaal as reflexive. The correct understanding of the reflexive forms is well

stated by Keil (p.166): "In jenen Stellen ist nur die subjective Stellung der Voelker zu dem Segen Abrahams hervorgehoben, dass naemlich die Voelker sich den Segen, der ihnen in Abraham und seinem Samen werden soll, auch selber wuenschen werden."

The Messianic implications of the text are of course ignored by such statements as that of Skinner quoted above, which make of this whole promise a formula that will be used as a popular good-luck wish. This is immediately refuted by Gal. 3,16. But Hongstenberg falls into a more subtle error, p.54:

The Apostle does not in the least think of maintaining that, by צרף "seed", only a single individual could be signified. Such an opinion, no one who understood Hebrew could for a moment entertain; and Rom. 4,13 shows that Paul was indeed very far from doing so. No, all to which Paul intends to draw our attention is the fact, that the Lord, who, when He gave the promise, had already in view its fulfilment which He had Himself to accomplish, did not unintentionally choose an expression which, besides the comprehensive meaning which would most naturally suggest itself to the Patriarchs, admitted also of the more restricted one which was confirmed by the fulfilment.

But St. Paul does mean to refer צרף to a single individual, Gal, 3,16:

"He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ". Rom. 4,15 uses the word "seed" of Abraham's progeny (v.12) and therefore does not apply in this argument. If we are to call a clean-cut and carefully guarded statement such as Gal. 3,16 into question, language ceases to be an adequate medium for the conveyance of thought.

Chapter IV

The Coming of Shiloh. Genesis 49,10 (8-12)

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

1. Preliminary Observations

Thru the recurrent promise of Gen. 12,3 the Messianic hope was firmly established in the lives and hearts of the Patriarchs. It was their comfort in the trying times that characterized their lives most of the time. Abraham, rich as he was, had no permanent home as long as he lived and had to move about from place to place. He had family and labor troubles and difficulties with kings who would fain have slain him to get his beautiful wife Sarah. The same type of troubles confronted Isaac and Jacob, who had to contend with murders in the family, incest, worldliness of their children, and the like. It is not surprising to read of the Patriarchs Hebrews 11,16, "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly." God did not merely permit these troubles to enter their lives, but sent them with a definite purpose. He removed from the Patriarchs all the fascination of this life and turned their mind on heavenly things. Thus their hope and expectation for the redemption was quickened and their chief aims and ambitions in life were of a spiritual nature, as we see in the case of Jacob Gen. 48 and 49. Knowing this, we are not surprised to find a rather advanced display of doctrinal knowledge in Jacob's three-fold mention of God Gen. 48,15.16: "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads".

When Jacob realizes that his end is near, he calls all his sons to his death-bed with the purpose "that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days." He is speaking in a prophetic spirit and is therefore the mouthpiece of God. God has certain things to say to the sons of Jacob; but He does not speak to them directly as He spoke to Adam and Eve in the Garden, to Noah after the flood and to Jacob and his fathers in their days. He now puts His words into the mouth of a man. The words of Jacob Gen. 49,3-27 are therefore to be looked upon as the words of God Himself just as much as the words introduced directly with *וַיֹּאמֶר*. Of the promise to Judah Luther says, "Dieser Spruch ist eine goettliche Verheissung, die nicht luegen mag, und erfuellt muss werden, oder verginge ehe Himmel und Erde" (XX, 1808).

Having traced the line of the descendants of Adam and of Noah that bore the promise of redemption, we now naturally look for the bearer of this promise among the sons of Jacob. In the family of Terah the promise goes to the firstborn, Abram. In the family of Abraham it goes to the son whom God prepared by a miraculous birth to receive the promise. Esau and Jacob were twins; but thru the most unusual circumstances the promise went to the son that was younger and least loved by Isaac (Gen. 25,28). In the history of the Messianic promise God has so often disregarded the priority of the firstborn (Seth was not the firstborn, Gen. 4,1.2.25; Arphaxad was not the first son of Shem, Gen. 10,22; David and Solomon were not first-born), that we cannot consider the birthright as a determining factor in the transmission of the promise. Then it does not surprise us that in the prophecy of Reubon, Jacob's first son, the Messianic promise is entirely excluded; likewise is there not a trace of it in the prophecy given Simeon and Levi. These sons had carried on in such a way that they were not worthy of any of the privileges of birthright. As one looks over the promises given the respective sons of Jacob, one could possibly imagine that the Messiah

is spoken of in the promise given Joseph, the first son of Jacob's favorite wife (and, by betrothal, his first wife, Gen. 29,18,25). In themselves, the following expressions used of Joseph could certainly be understood in a Messianic way: "From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel" (this, however, refers to the fact that salvation is from the Mighty One of Jacob); verse 26 seems to place the blessing of the fathers directly on Joseph: "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." But history shows that the Messiah did not come from Joseph; the "blessings of thy father" must be mainly temporal and spiritual only insofar as Joseph too shares in the blessings of the Messiah. The only other son of Jacob that is promised an extravagant blessing that may be compared and identified with that promised the Patriarchs is Judah. From history we know that he, the fourth son of Jacob, was the progenitor of the Messiah. He did so had not led an exemplary life, Gen. 38,15ff. The promise is placed on one who is unworthy; it is a promise of grace.

We must examine the prophecy concerning Judah as to its Messianic content. The passage is indeed difficult in many points; but all these points of difficulty, if piled together and magnified many times, are not as great as the difficulty that would confront us, if Jacob had entirely omitted intelligible reference to the promise on which he and his fathers had leaned all their lives from the extended prophecy concerning his sons. Of this Messianic prophecy we again have no distinct citation in the N.T. to guide us. There is a reference in Heb. 7,14 which may show that Moses spoke about Judah in such a way as to indicate that the Messiah would come from him: "It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood." But this reference is too vague without the support of history to be a basis of an O.T. interpretation. We must therefore study the

blessing of Judah thought for thought and find the Messianic element in the text itself.

2. The Temporal Promise of Judah

The prophecy opens, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise"; יהודה יִרְאֶה בְּיָדָיו יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה. The use of the verb יִרְאֶה with the name of Judah is not accidental. The name יהודה derives its meaning from the Hiphil of the verb יָרָא, "to praise". When Judah was born his mother Leah burst forth in praise, Gen. 29,35: "And she conceived and bare again, and bare a son: and she said, Now will I praise the Lord: therefore she called his name Judah". Jacob gives Judah's name a new shade of meaning. He had been called "Judah" because he was a cause for praise to his mother. Jacob now prophesies that he shall be an object of praise among his brethren. His nomen becomes omen. Lest only his full-brothers, the sons of Leah, be understood, the text expressly says, "Thy father's children shall bow down before thee". The reason why he shall be praised by his brethren is given in three points: 1. his hand shall be in the neck of his enemies, v.8b; 2. his is a lion-like character, v.9; 3. from him shall come Shiloh, unto whom shall be the obedience of people, v.10 (this promise we shall find to be spiritual, not temporal, as is the promise in points 1.2).

1. What is said in v.8b is not said only of the person of Judah; with his name the whole tribe of Judah is meant. In the days of the Patriarchs people always had to fight for their safe dwelling and peaceful living. He who was able to overcome intruders and enemies consistently would in the long run have a more peaceful lot than the other; it was a matter of creating respect among the neighbors by being too powerful for them. Such was to be the lot of the tribe of

Judah. To have the hand "in the neck of the enemies" pictures the foes as fleeing and being overcome. The enemies of Judah are not to get away from him. This military prowess of Judah was due to his lion-like nature. As the lion has the respect of the other animals because he is too strong for them, so Judah was to have the respect of his enemies. - Since these two points are so closely related, we can best treat the historic fulfilment of this prophecy in connection with the lion-like character of Judah.

2. The lion-like character of Judah is presented in a vivid picture. וְיִשְׂרָאֵל is the whelp of a lion before it has matured. After the disgraceful characterizations of the three older brothers, this statement is all the more complimentary: "A whelp of a lion is Judah". It portrays the tribe of Judah as being young and vigorous, coming to realize its prowess and power. The next thought pictures Judah as a lion returning to the height of his mountain lair, there to gloat over his prey: "From prey, my son, hast thou gone up; he has stooped down, he has couched down as a lion and as a lioness; who will rouse him up?" וְיִשְׂרָאֵל and וְיִשְׂרָאֵל are perfect prophetic, used to make the prophecy as certain as if it were already fulfilled. וְיִשְׂרָאֵל , which the AV gives as "an old lion", is better translated by Luther with "Loewin". The female of the species is the more ferocious. We have therefore a progressive picture of Judah's might: the young lion is an animal that is just learning to use its strength and uses it with much fire and energy; the lion going up from prey is the sure and experienced hunter; the female lion is the fiercest, whom no one will dare to rouse up when she cowers over the prey that she has gotten for her young. Boehl sketches the application of this characterization to the person of Judah, p.96f: "Nun, diese Löwenart lag in der Tat schon in der Person Juda's selbst ausgepraegt. Schon Juda tritt wiederholt als Fuehrer und Berater seiner Brueder hervor. Er leitet Joseph's Ver-

kauf, während auf Ruben's Rat nicht gehoert wird. Er wird Buerge fuer Benjamin, Gen. 44,18-34; kurz, er ist der geistige Herrscher unter seinen Bruedern, wie der Loewe unter den Tieren". Early in the history of Israel Judah assumes leadership among the tribes. Judah went before the other tribes in the journey thru the wilderness, Num. 2,3; 23,24, and in the wars of the conquest of Canaan, Judg. 1,2. The promise was especially fulfilled in the person of the warlike David, who was a descendant of Judah and was always victorious over his enemies. For this he was honored by all the tribes of Israel, 1 Sam. 18,16: "All Israel and Judah loved David". After David follows the entire dynasty founded by him, which was as a lion in its warfare against its enemies as long as it drew its strength from the Lord as David did.

3. The Spiritual Promises

3. The establishment of scepter and rule thru military prowess is closely related to the third cause, why the brothers of Judah shall praise him: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the obedience of people be". The mention of a scepter substantiates the application of the foregoing verse to the days of David and his successors. The phrase "nor a lawgiver from between his feet" is awkward in the connection. $pp'n$ is the Polel participle of the verb ppn , meaning "to engrave" or "establish". The meaning of this participial form is somewhat uncertain. "Lawgiver" and "commander's staff" are the two meanings generally accepted. Because of the parallelism with $וְיָשׁוּב$, the meaning "imperial staff" is to be preferred to "lawgiver". That fits well into the picture presented by these clauses to the oriental mind. In olden times it was the custom of the kings to carry a long ornamental staff on public occasions. This staff was placed between the feet on the floor and held upright. The prophecy then means that the sceptre will stay with Judah and he

will not lose the imperial staff until Shiloh come. If the masculine form of $\text{p}^{\text{p}}\text{n}^{\text{p}}\text{q}$ be accepted, as is the case in the translations of Luther and of the theologians of King James, "from between thy feet" is tantamount to "from between thy loins" and must be looked upon as an "euphemismus generationis". But evidently "imperial staff" is the intended sense of the text.

The next question is that of the $\text{q}^{\text{p}}\text{q}^{\text{p}}$. This is used much like the Greek $\epsilon\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, Latin usque ad. It denotes the terminus ad quem; what lies beyond that it does not say. It may mean "up to a certain time and no longer", or it may also mean, "up to a certain time and beyond it". It is very difficult to determine which sense is intended in this place; in fact, both are possible. If $\text{q}^{\text{p}}\text{q}^{\text{p}}$ be taken as "until Shiloh come and no longer" this is a warning; if it be taken as "at least until Shiloh come", it includes also the time of the spiritual scepter of Judah, the N.T. era. In view of vv. 11.12 the latter is no doubt the more natural meaning; but also the other fits very well, as we shall show in another connection.

Who is Shiloh? The word is a hapax legomenon. To establish the identity of Shiloh from the text itself requires sharp reasoning; but the identification is certainly there nevertheless. It is reasonable to say that $\text{h}^{\text{p}}\text{h}^{\text{p}}\text{w}$ must refer to the person under whom Judah will be in his greatest glory (that Shiloh refers to a person is evident from the i^{p} of the next clause). That consideration alone permits one to think only of David and Solomon or Christ. Under the former Judah was in his greatest temporal glory; under Christ Judah came into his greatest spiritual glory. According to Biblical standards, temporal glory is not as great as spiritual glory. Judah's temporal glory was but short-lived, while the spiritual blessing, which came thru Christ, will continue into eternity. Here Luther speaks very much to the point:

Darum mag dieser Spruch von niemand anders denn von Jesu Christo, unsern Herrn, verstanden werden, welcher ist von dem Stamm Juda, aus dem koeniglichen Haus David, und ist einkommen, da

das Scepter an Herodes, den Fremdling, kam, und bisher Koenig gewesen, und bleibt diese fuenfzehnhunder Jahr bis in Ewigkeit. (XX, 1809.)

Darum hat das Scepter Juda wohl gewahrt von David an bis auf Schilo, als das leiblich war und sterbliche Koenige hatte nach einander; aber da Schilo kommen ist, bleibt es auf einer Person ewiglich, und hat nicht mehr Koenige, einen nach dem andern. (XX, 1811.)

It is evident that this line of reasoning is correct in every detail; but more convincing is the phrase, "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be", rendered more accurately, "To him shall be obedience of peoples". This is a characteristic mark of the Messiah. Boehl carries this thought out more thoroly: "Dem Schilo also soll der Gehorsam der Voelker zufallen. Das Reich des Schilo ist ein solches, in dem man Gehorsam zu ueben hat; es ist ein Reich, dessen Kraft im Worte besteht; "ein regnum", wie Luther sagt, "potentissimum in verbo", also was hinsichtlich des Wortes maechtig ist; und als die Maechte, wogegen dieses Reich seine Macht handhabt, nennt er den Tod, die Suende, den Teufel. Sehr treffend weist Luther hier hin auf Gehorsam, erleuchtet vom heiligen Geist, wie er war; denn das Reich des Messias bestehe in auditu et obedientia, wie Ps. 2,10 geschrieben stehe." P.100. Luther speaks even more convincingly at another place (XX, 1814):

Aus diesem Spruch zeucht und gruendet sich auch eine vernuenf-tige Ursach, zu beweisen, dass dieser Schilo muss kommen sein zur Zeit, da unser Jesus Christus kommen ist, und kein anderer sein kann, denn derselbe Jesus, naemlich also: Der Spruch sagt, dass diesem Schilo sollen Voelker zu-fallen oder anhangen. Nun frage ich die Juden, wann je gewesen sei ein solcher Mann aus dem juedischen Stamm, dem so viel Volks sei angehangen, als diesem Jesu Christo?

Boehl lists some of the instances of the acceptance of Schiloh as Messianic among the Jews that throw additional light on the matter (p.99):

Die Uebersetzung des Onkelos hat: "Usque ad tempus, quo veniat rex Messias"; ferner schalten das Targum Jonathan und das Targum von Jerusalem den Messias hier ein; ebenso der Sohar, dann Saadia, das alte Bereschit Rabba, eine Sammlung midraschischer Auslegungen; ja selbst Rabbi Salamo Jarchi exponirt Schilo vom Messias und Rabbi David Kimchi (s.r. shiloh in seinem bekannten Wörterbuch) sagt: "estque

vaticinium de Davide, aut de Messia". Rabbi Bechai sagt: "tertius versus (sel.V.10) loquitur de rege Messia redemptore posteriore." Auch der Talmud in Sanhedrin, Cap. 11, 98b, nennt unter den Namen des Messias an erster Stelle den Namen Schilo.

The question now remains whether the scepter did really stay with Judah until the time of the Messiah. If it did not, then we have a point against the Messianic interpretation. It is true that the Jews as a nation had lost their independence several centuries before the Messiah appeared and for that reason we have in some instances become accustomed to read the statement about the scepter of Judah with a mental question mark, if we consider the passage Messianic. But here we must take the context into account very carefully. The whole passage speaks of Judah in relation to his brothers, not as a nation (as was the case in the promise to the Patriarchs) or as a dynasty. His tribe is given preeminence over the other tribes. He is to be the outstanding one among them, especially in military accomplishments, as is shown with the figure of the lion. But the point of the prophecy does not include more than that Judah shall be the leader among his brethren. He remained in that position also after the glory of the kingdom and the dynasty had been lost; the very fact that the name of Judah eventually became the name of Jacob's family testifies to the fact that "the scepter" did not depart from Judah. Judah continued in the role assigned to him by Jacob until the Messiah came; but after that Jerusalem fell (64 A.D.) Luther has the same argumentation from a different angle (XX, 1808):

Und ob sie wollten sagen, es waere das Scepter von Juda auch gewandt zur Zeit der babylonischen Gefaengniss, da die Juden gen Babylonien gefuehrt und siebenzig Jahr gefangen waren, und dennoch zu derselben Zeit Messias nicht kam; ist zu antworten, dass nicht so ist, denn die ganze Zeit des Gefaengnisses blieb dennoch der koenigliche Stamm in dem Koenige Jechonja, darnach in Zorobabel, und andern Fuersten fuer und fuer, bis dass Herodes Koenig ward. Denn das Scepter heisst nicht allein Koenigreich, sondern auch Fuerstentum, wie die Juden wohl wissen. Dazu hatten sie noch allowege Propheten, also, dass noch nie das Koenigreich oder Fuerstentum unter-

ging, ob sie gleich eine Zeitlang ausser dem Lande waren, auch noch nie alle aus dem Lande vertrieben waren, wie es diese funfzehnhundert Jahr ergangen ist, da sie weder Fuersten noch Propheten gehabt haben.

The Messianic meaning of the passage is therefore certain to one who reveres the text as it stands as God's Word. Even Driver says (p.386), "Nevertheless, the clause, viewed in relation to its context, does seem to contain a Messianic thought". But before we can continue in the text we must note some of the observations that have been made regarding the possible meaning of the hapax legomenon שִׁלּוֹחַ .

What does Shiloh mean? The most scientific opinion on the matter is perhaps that of those who say that the term cannot as yet be translated, since none of the translations that are advanced can be definitely substantiated. The least worthy of the opinions we mention holds that Shiloh, שִׁלּוֹחַ , is an accusativus loci, making it the name of a place. The underlying idea of this translation is, "Till Judah with Israel comes to Shiloh", referring to the meeting under Joshua's leadership at the place Shiloh in what is now known as Samaria. But that interpretation fits neither the text nor the facts of history. Joshua was of the tribe of Benjamin, not of Judah. The term שִׁלּוֹחַ does not mean "gathering" as the AV gives it, but "obedience". There was no obedience to the central authority of Judah at this time, such as existed later under David and Solomon. - Another opinion (held by Luther and many conservative theologians) traces the meaning of שִׁלּוֹחַ to the verb שָׁלַח , related to שָׁלַח , which means "to be quiet and at rest." If derived from this verb, the orthography of שִׁלּוֹחַ would be שִׁלּוֹחַ ; in a similar way Zidon is derived from צִידֹן , צִידֹן from צָדַק . In proper names the nun is sometimes dropped, as in יִצְחָק . "Source of rest" would indeed be an apt designation for the Messiah, especially since that idea is so closely connected with later prophecy and with the work and doctrine of Christ. But this interpretation is weakened by the fact that it is difficult to substan-

tiate the connection between זֶה־שׁוֹ and זֶה־שׁ . - Another opinion reprints the text to read זֶה־שׁ instead of זֶה־שׁוֹ , deriving it from the relative שׁ plus זֶה , "that which belongs to him". In this reading, however, the yodh is unaccounted for, and שׁ stands as the only instance of the shortened form of the relative in early Hebrew literature; its earliest occurrence is Judg. 7,12; 8,26, unless the doubtful Job 19,29 be considered earlier. Keil does not accept this interpretation of זֶה־שׁ : "Abgesehen davon, dass שׁ fuer שׁוֹ hier zwecklos waere und diese Abkuerzung im Pentateuche nicht nachweisbar ist, muesste es wenigstens זֶה־שׁוֹ אֶת־הַ , "dem es (das Scepter) gebuehrt" heissen, da זֶה־שׁ fuer sich allein diesen Sinn nicht ausdruecken kann und eine Ellipse des אֶת־הַ in diesem Falle unerhoert waere". P.333. - The exact meaning of זֶה־שׁ must therefore remain an object of future study. For the present we can hardly go beyond the pertinent remark of Boehl (p.98): "Es steht so abrupt und kurz da, dass es notwendig eine bekannte Redensart gewesen sein muss. Schilo scheint ein Name des Erloesers gewesen zu sein, der in der Familie Jakob's gebräuchlich war." *

*Joh. Gerhard, in his *Commentarius super Genesin*, states several interpretations in addition to those noted. (The interpretations already mentioned which also occur in this quotation are included for the sake of completeness.) "Quare Messias appelletur Schilo? 1. Targum זֶה־שׁ accepit positum pro זֶה־שׁ quod Rabbiniis est *cujus*, et subintellexit regnum. Sic enim locum hunc reddidit: Donec veniat Messias, *cujus* est regnum. 2. Idem videntur secuti LXX. Interpp. qui reddiderunt, $\text{ὁ ἀποκρίμενα ἀδελφῶν}$, reposita ei, ut legunt Cypr. August. & Chrysost. cui reposita scilicet 1. regnum Juda & Israel, 2. jus salvandi Israel, 3. omnes promissiones Abrahae & Davidi factae, 4. omnes thesauri gratiae & gloriae, 5. fides & obedientia omnium gentium, 6. judicium vivorum & mortuorum. 3. Hieronymus vertit, qui mittendus est. Legit ergo זֶה־שׁ a זֶה־שׁ , misit, ob literarum ז & שׁ similitudinem. Sed aliud est ז , aliud שׁ . 4. Rabbi D. Kimchi in lib. Serassin, citante Galatino lib. 4. de arcan. c.4 זֶה־שׁ inquit 5. Cum hac expositione fere coincidet sententia illorum, qui flatuunt, ז esse affixum foemininum, י masculinum, ut sic notetur, Messiam fore filium Mariae ratione causae proximae, filium Judae ratione causae remotae. 6. Gordonus Huntlaeus suspicatur, olim in textu Hebraeo scriptum fuisse זֶה־שׁ missus, i.e., mittendus, posito praeterito pro futuro more Prophetico, Judaeos autem illud corrupisse & mutasse in זֶה־שׁ . Nomen mittendi competere Messiae probant ex Exod. 4.v.13 & ad hoc nomen aluisse Christum putant, quando illuminaturus coecum misit eum ad pisci-

Another factor that helps to determine v.10 as Messianic is the prophecy which follows in the next two verses. There we have a prophecy of temporal luxury, as it were, spoken in language that we know so well from Isaiah and almost all the prophets after him as a description of the abundance of blessings in the Messianic kingdom: "Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes; his eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk". These verses say, in brief, that wine shall be as plentiful as water and milk will be had in great abundance by all Judah. That is a picture of the kingdom of the Messiah, when the Holy Ghost will be poured out on all the Seed of Abraham (the Seed of Abraham being here identical with Judah) so that the precious, strengthening and vivifying gift of the Holy Ghost will be available to every man; the most precious spiritual nourishment will be a household commodity. It is the same as what Jeremiah says, 31,33,34: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more". In a prophecy it is wrong to try to apply every detail in the fulfilment. The tertium comparationis is the plenty in the land of Judah under Shiloh; beyond that we may not go.

nam siloach, Joh. 9.v.3. Sed haec est inanis & falsa conjectura. ... 7. Leo Castrius lib. 3. Apol. pro Schilo, substitutis aliis punctis, legit $\aleph \delta \psi$ id est donum seu promissum ei, & sic putat legisse LXX. Sed mutare puncta textui essentialia non est privati artibrii. 8. Galatinus & alii pro $\aleph \delta \psi$ legunt $\aleph \delta \psi$ qui ejus, id est, mulieris & filius carens patre. Sed & haec expositio mutat puncta. 9. Raschi resolvit in $\aleph \delta \psi$ munera illi scilicet offerentur. Quidam retexunt in $\aleph \delta \psi$ qui est DEI Scil. Filius. 10. B.Lutherus simplicissime statuit $\aleph \delta \psi$ significare Salvatorem, felicem, fortunatum, augustum, cui omnia feliciter succedunt, pacis & felicitatis autorem, a rad. $\aleph \delta \psi$ pacificus, quietus, & per metonum felix, fortunatus fuit." P.860ff.

4. Theology

There has been a definite progress in the revelation of the Messiah. Gen. 3,15 He was designated as "her Seed"; 12,3 and parallels, as the "Seed of Abraham". Here the line of descent is limited to Judah among the sons of Jacob. There is also a progress of development in the theology of the prophecy. Gen. 3,15 the Messiah is presented as He thru whom all people of the earth of all times will be blessed. The universality of the redemption and of the grace of God are emphasized, but special importance is attached to the fact that the blessing must be received by faith. Gen. 49,10 the Messiah is for the first time designated by a name. Hitherto He has only been referred to as "her Seed" and "thy Seed". Now He is given the name Shilo. Besides this, the text introduces the prophecy of plenty in the kingdom of the Messiah. This shows that the grace of God is not only free and accessible to everyone, but also abundant to everyone. Being the first time that this manner of describing the N.T. era occurs, it naturally appears to be vague to some extent; but it certainly is the Scriptural *usus loquendi* in regard to the Messiah's kingdom, the *Una Sancta*. Hengstenberg says:

By being transferred to Judah, the promise of the Messiah acquired not only the expected limitation, but an unexpected increase of clearness and precision. Here, for the first time, the person of the Messiah is brought before us; here also the nature of his kingdom is more distinctly pointed out by His being represented as the peaceful one, and the peacemaker who will unite, under His mild sceptre, all the nations of the whole earth. (P.12.)

The Book of Genesis covers as large a period of time as all the O.T. books put together. Its Messianic prophecies are few and far between, but in them lies the foundation of the theology of all Scripture.

5. Differing Interpretations

Since the higher critical attitude toward Scripture characterizes almost all the world of Bible interpretation that does not revere the sacred text as the inspired Word of God, all the noteworthy exceptions to the Messianic interpretation can be brought under the heads of rationalistic and Jewish schools of thought.

The Jewish interpretation has already been stated with some comment p.50. But that is not held very tenaciously among the Jews, as we see in the Jewish Encyclopedia XI,290: "It is doubtful if there is a reference to Shiloh" (meaning the city Shiloh) "in the blessing of Jacob (Gen. 49,10), as the ordinary interpretation assumes: 'As long as (pilgrims) come to Shiloh', that is, while the sanctuary is established there".

The approach of higher criticism is stated in a representative way by Driver, p.386.

The verse, in either case, will then promise that the sovereignty will not depart from Judah, till it is merged in the higher, more perfect sovereignty to be exercised by its ideal ruler, the Messiah. Such a reference to the Messiah seems however to presuppose the teaching of Isaiah and other prophets; and as it has been noticed also that v.11f connect better with v. 9 than with v.10, it must remain an open question whether v.10 is not a comparatively late addition to the original blessing, added for the purpose of introducing into it the prophetic thought of the future rule of the ideal king (so Wellh., Dillm.).

This view is based on the assumption that the theology of the O.T. grew by accretion in such a way that only a few (and comparatively pagan) doctrines were known in early times, to which the more distinctively Biblical doctrines were added in the course of the centuries. The reference to the Messiah by a personal name is to have occurred no earlier than in the time of Isaiah. Add to this the supposition that the sacred text has been subject to repeated interpolations and editions (for which history has not the slightest evidence), and one gets a statement such as that of Driver. The theology of the O.T. did grow by accretion; but it grew in concentric circles. The

fundamental doctrines were presented first as a nucleus (e.g., Gen. 3,15 and 12,3) and additions were made to the centre of the doctrine from time to time. It is therefore folly to suppose that the detailed Prophecy of Isaiah can be the basis of Gen. 49,10 or of the other Messianic verses in Genesis. The doctrines presented by Isaiah were built around the foundation established in Genesis and the other prophecies that preceded him.

Skinner comes into the open with the opinions of modern ~~unbelief~~ on this passage. "The poem" Gen. 49,3-27) "is a series of vaticinia ex eventu, reflecting the conditions and aspirations of the period that saw the consolidation of Hebrew nationality. The examination of the separate oracles will show that some are certainly pre-monarchic; and that indeed all may be so except the blessing on Judah, which presupposes the establishment of the Davidic kingdom" P.509. Then other statements made by Skinner in this connection are not surprising. He is consistent when he says, p.508: "The analogy of O.T. prophecy, which has been appealed to, furnishes no instance of detailed provision of a remote future, unrelated to the moral issues of the speaker's present." There are other instances of detailed prophecy (Cyrus, Is. 44.45); but these are likewise relegated to the time after they were fulfilled. The difficulty of Jacob as the speaker in Davidic times, or over a long period of time (Gen. 49,1) he solves thus: "The speaker is not Jacob the individual patriarch, but (as is clear from vv. 6.7b.16) Jacob as representing the ideal unity of Israel". All these statements taken together help us to understand his evaluation of the blessing of Judah, vv. 8-12 (p.519): "The glories of Judah are celebrated in four aspects: (1) as the premier tribe of Israel, 8; (2) as the puissant and victorious lion-tribe, 9; (3) as the bearer (in some sense) of the Messianic hope, 10; (4) as lavishly endowed with the blessings of nature.

These interpretations, and all similar ones, are entirely arbitrary, as is shown by the "clear" passages Gen. 49,6.7b.16, which are alleged to

show without a doubt that "Jacob" is but an ideal name. Such opinions are unscientific and untenable. To revere the text as the inspired Word of God the exegete must hold to the integrity of the text and take the words in their normal meaning in Scripture. Thus vv. 11.12 taken in their Scriptural significance do not fit to v.9 at all, as is alleged, but only to v.10. According to the text, which must be honored as correct, Jacob spoke these promises; they are therefore prophecies of future events that have been fulfilled as surely as God is true.

The subjective and arbitrary interpretations of higher criticism are certainly evidence to the supposition that it does not want to hear the Word of God nor will it listen to what God has to say. All who engage in such tactics must be warned with John 8,47: "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God".

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